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In The Name Of Your Daughter

SYNOPSIS

Heartbreaking and Heartwarming, *In The Name Of Your Daughter* is an intimate fly-on-the-wall story about some of the most courageous girls in the world, children like feisty 12-year old Rosie Makore who ran away from her home in Northern Tanzania to save herself from female genital mutilation (FGM) and the child marriage her parents had planned for her.

Terrified of stories of girls bleeding to death during the chillingly named 'cutting season' during the school holidays in December, these young African girls, some as young as eight, must face the most difficult choice of their young lives: submit to being cut or risk their lives and run away, not knowing if they'll ever see their families again.

Rhobi Samwelly, one of Africa's most charismatic women, protects the girls - Christians, Pagans and Muslims - at a Safe House, and travels around the countryside fighting against this thousands-year-old tradition.

Hers is a tough and dangerous job. FGM is illegal in Tanzania, but old customs die hard. Men believe that girls' clitorises must be cut off to reduce promiscuity, and mutilated girls command twice the bride price in cows as uncut girls. In partnership with the Safe House, Mugumu police officer Sijali Nyambuche and her team start cracking down on FGM. In night-time raids they rescue girls at risk and arrest parents and cutters.

As the year's cutting season winds down, in dramatic and heart-breaking reconciliation meetings, parents have to decide if they'll spare their daughters and take them back, and young girls like Rosie must decide if they'll be safe if they return home.

Set in the stunning landscape of East Africa's Serengeti district, this is ultimately an inspiring and hopeful story of brave young girls standing up for their human rights and fighting for change in their community.

FGM STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

Main Facts:

Every 11 seconds a girl is mutilated

More than 3 million girls are at risk each year

There are 200 million survivors of FGM

FGM has no benefits, and does only harm.

Girls regularly die, or suffer infection and lifelong problems, including difficulty urinating, menstruating, increased risk of maternal and child death, and pain during sexual intercourse

FGM occurs primarily in Africa, but is also prevalent in the Middle East and Asia, and is present in pockets elsewhere—India, Colombia, Peru, Russia, Iran, Iraq

There are different kinds of mutilation, ranging from cutting part or all of the external genitalia, to sewing what remains of the genitalia shut and leaving only a pinhole for urination and menstruation.

Websites:

WHO

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/>

UNICEF Summary 2016

https://www.unicef.org/media/media_90033.html

FULL UNICEF Report 2016

https://www.unicef.org/media/files/FGMC_2016_brochure_final_UNICEF_SPREAD.pdf

FILM BACKGROUND

In late 2016 Giselle Portenier ran a successful Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign which raised close to \$75,000 US in donations from four hundred people in thirty countries. Portenier filmed for two months during Tanzania's chillingly called 'cutting season' during the Christmas holidays at the end of 2016 and early 2017. Portenier and her all-Tanzanian crew followed the stories of the young girls as they arrived after having run away from home, efforts by local campaigners like Rhobi Samwelly to protect the girls, and the police as they rescued girls in dramatic raids.

The film's premiere is in Copenhagen on March 20th, 2018, and TV broadcasters in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and the U.K. will screen the film later this year.

DIRECTOR and PRODUCER

Giselle Portenier is a Canadian journalist and documentary filmmaker who is passionate about human rights, especially the human rights of children and women. Her ground-breaking films have shown globally and have received numerous prestigious accolades, including two Peabody Awards. More importantly, they have helped local activists change minds, hearts and laws. Honour Killings in Pakistan, Child slavery in Africa, Female Infanticide in India, and Sex Slavery in Thailand are among the tough topics she tackled while based in London for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC.)

In The Name Of Your Daughter is Portenier's second feature documentary. She is hoping to turn this film about the most courageous girls in the world running into a powerful tool for change. Portenier now lives in Vancouver with her husband Christopher Browne.

MAIN CREDITS

Editor, Cathy Gulkin

Deborah Parks, Co-Producer

Samson Kapinga, Cinematographer

Laurent Kiria, location sound

Boaz Mashauri, assistant cameraman

Hadija Hassan, interpreter

Sam Obae, production manager, Tanzania

TESTIMONIALS

Mary Wandia, End FGM Program Manager, Equality Now

I am delighted that Canadian award-winning director Giselle Portenier is making a documentary about the courageous Tanzanian girls who are standing up for their rights and saying no to being mutilated. **In The Name Of Your Daughter will no doubt be an inspiring, compelling and important**

documentary that will help raise awareness about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM,) a human rights violation deeply rooted in gender inequality and discrimination. With hundreds of thousands of immigrants from affected countries arriving in the West, FGM is now a Western issue too.

**Marie Natanson,
Former Executive Producer, CBC Documentaries, Toronto, Canada**

Giselle Portenier is one of the most outstanding filmmakers I've ever had the pleasure of working with. She has a passion for human rights and social justice and brings those stories to the screen with the utmost sensitivity and artistry. She helps her subjects speak for themselves....even about the unspeakable.

An estimated 200 million girls and women living today have undergone genital mutilation. Giselle will highlight this gross violation of human rights with "In The Name Of Your Daughter" in the most compelling way. It will be a landmark film, like so many of her other films. I can hardly wait to see it.

Rhobi Samwelly, Human Rights Activist, FGM Survivor, director, Mugumu Safe House for Girls, Tanzania

My dream is to save girls from being cut, and I will never stop until FGM is history in my community. This film is very very important because it will help raise awareness not just in our community, but in the district and even in other countries that are receiving African people who have the same tradition of cutting. It may help make our people change. It will also give our girls a voice, people will be able to hear the children, because they've never been heard before.

Rhobi Samwelly, Human Rights Activist, FGM Survivor, director, Mugumu Safe House for Girls, Tanzania

Karen Musalo

Professor, Director of the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, University of California Hastings, and attorney for Fauziya Kassindja, whose case established the legal landmark in the United States that fear of FGC was the basis for refugee protection

Although it has been condemned as physically and psychologically devastating and a violation of women's fundamental human rights, the practice of female genital cutting continues in countries around the world – even in those countries where it has been outlawed. Criticisms of it are most often brushed away by its practitioners, accusing those who speak against it of being western outsiders attempting to impose their will

on other cultures. *In The Name Of Your Daughter* is bound to be a powerful and essential rebuttal to this narrative of cultural imperialism. It promises to tell the story of resistance within the cultures themselves where FGC is practiced, through the story of a courageous woman who protects girls from the fate she herself could not avoid. **The documentary dispels the myth that FGC is accepted – and even desired – by the girls on whom it is inflicted, and by giving these girls a voice, In the Name of Your Daughter will make a monumental contribution to the struggle for women's human rights.**

Flora Terah-Igoki, Canadian/Kenyan Human Rights Activist, President, The Wanawake Foundation, East Africa

Giselle Portenier is a dedicated human rights defender and I have no doubt that she has the talent and commitment to produce an excellent film on the violations of girls' rights. Giselle has a long history of championing human rights and has won recognition from many corners, including an Amnesty International award and two Peabodys for her films. She has been an active proponent of human rights initiatives as well as an important role model for women's empowerment. I have been very fortunate to have been able to collaborate with her on the topic of female genital mutilation (FGM.) **In my own estimation, Giselle's film In The Name Of Your Daughter will be a huge contribution in the fight against FGM and forced child marriage.**

**Fiona Stourton,
Creative Director, TV and Radio , Zinc Media , responsible for the award winning factual production companies – Blakeway Productions. Brook Lapping and Films of Record.**

Giselle Portenier is a multi award winning film director who has specialized in stories of human rights abuses. From our time working together at the BBC, I know that many of her films were responsible for changing things. Her ability to shine a light in dark corners of the world and raise awareness has succeeded in making a difference for the better – changing attitudes and laws. The continuing horror of FGM is one of those issues which would be affected by a film by Giselle. Not only through its initial broadcast but because, like so many of her other films, it would win awards and be shown all round the world as a result.

F.M. A Canadian Survivor of FGM, Cranbrook, B.C.

In the summer of 2003 my siblings and I were laughing and telling stories on the balcony of my father's house.

In Africa, summer is a time to play and share stories under the moonlight with family and friends. It's a time when every girl's dream is for her parents to buy her new clothes for her vacation. I was sent to spend the holidays with my grandma who I really love. She was always there for me when I was growing up and taught me the ways and traditions of Gambia. Before I returned home to my father and stepmother, my Grandma bought me some lovely clothes and traditional African jewellery. I was so happy. Back at my father's house, on the 25th of August 2003 at 4 a.m., my stepmother woke me up. I was very surprised to be woken up at that awkward hour. I was only thirteen and had no choice but to obey. I showered and then noticed she was talking to another women who had arrived with three young girls my age. I asked my stepmother why are we going out at this ungodly hour and she said we were going to visit a friend who was critically ill. I trusted her because I was young and naive. We drove for a long time and ended up in an old and empty house in a remote area. After we arrived, my step mum and the other ladies had a long conversation inside. Then my step mum came out of the house and took me inside. They took one of the other little girls into one of the rooms. After about five minutes I heard a loud scream coming from that room and I was scared to death! The little girl screamed and I was terrified and was about to run outside but my step mom grabbed me and they tied my hands so I couldn't struggle. That was the most

terrifying moment of my life!

I was grabbed again by two women who put a blindfold over my eyes. They started saying "don't worry, it won't hurt," but it hurt like hell. I was crying and screaming for my mom to come and get me. I really needed her but she was far away. I cried and prayed for rescue but none came. I felt completely helpless the moment they put me on the ground and I felt a sharp blade cutting into my private part. My clitoris was chopped off. At that moment I wished I was never born to this world. The pain I felt was the worst pain I had ever experienced in all my life, and I cried so much that I could hardly breathe.

It was like the world came to an end.

That whole day I couldn't pee because I was so scared of the pain; I was not given any painkillers or anything to reduce the pain. **It was the worst experience ever. No girl should ever have to go through that horror. These are our lives and the children's voices need to be heard and respected. I believe this film will help give our children that voice.**

Ewa Ewart, Host of the Ewa Ewart Recommends Documentary Series, TVN24, Warsaw, Poland

Giselle Portenier is one of the best documentary filmmakers I've had the privilege and pleasure to work alongside during our many years at the BBC. Some of the most important awards in our industry, which she has won many times, testify to her talents and skills as an accomplished director and producer. Her films, which consistently and thoroughly expose gross injustice and grave human rights abuses are elegantly put together, inspiring, utterly moving and speak directly to human conscience. She is fearless in tackling the most challenging subjects, and she always treats her contributors and their stories tactfully and with the utmost respect. For many of them, her work made a difference in their lives. I have no doubt that the film she is planning to make will be a most significant and outstanding contribution in highlighting the importance of fighting against FGM, one of the most harmful practices suffered by so many young girls around the world."

Raheel Raza

Human Rights Activist

President, Council For Muslims Facing Tomorrow and Founding Member, Muslim Reform Movement.

This testimonial is to applaud and support the efforts of award-winning director Giselle Portenier, who is embarking on a challenging film about the rights of girls and specifically Female Genital Mutilation. Portenier has produced and directed more than 30 long-form documentaries and many shorter television magazine features, mostly during her twenty-year career at the BBC based in London. For much of that time, she has concentrated on hard-hitting international human rights investigations. In 2014 she received an honorary doctor of laws from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, for her contribution to journalism.

As a human rights activist, I fully support the work being done by Portenier and thank her for bringing critical issues to the forefront without worrying about being politically correct. Her work is imperative to the battle for women's human rights globally.

**Julian Marcus, Chair, Overseas Development Trust,
Tanzanian Development Trust, funder of the Tanzanian Safe House**

The Tanzania Development Trust (TDT) has been responsible for raising the money to build the Safe House and Vocational Training Centre for girls escaping from FGM in Mugumu, Northern Tanzania. Over the last 2 years the Safe House has saved hundreds of girls from the damaging, debilitating and life-denying procedure of FGM, still enforced by many parents of the local Kurya tribe. Gynaecologists in the region estimate that 60% of girls are at risk of FGM in the Mara region. The Safe House, led by one of Africa's most inspirational women, Rhobi Samwelly, herself an FGM victim, is for all girls/young women in need irrespective of faith or tribe. TDT and its partner the Anglican Mara Diocese completely endorse Giselle Portenier's plans to make a film at the Safe House. **We are aware of Giselle's superb record of documentary film-making and are entirely confident that she has the tact, skills, expertise and knowledge to gain the confidence of the girls and to produce an honest and strong documentary that will help in the campaign against FGM and support Rhobi and her team.**

Please contribute!

**Marci Bowers, MD
Gynecologist and Reconstructive FGM surgeon, San Mateo, California**

FGM is a cultural practice whose unfortunate outcome is that of ruining the sexual lives of its victims and partners. 130 million women are affected despite a majority of countries now outlawing this practice. The procedure continues predominantly in the smaller communities and villages of Africa, thanks largely to the 'cutters' who, ironically, are women who have themselves been cut, but profit from this practice and use misinformation to sustain it. Sexual sensation is a basic human sense and deserves comparison with sight, sound or touch. To deprive a girl of this sense is to violate her basic human rights. As a pelvic surgeon and Ob/Gyn with more than 26 years' experience, I am one of a very few surgeons worldwide who are trained to functionally restore clitoral sensation for women who have been genitally mutilated--- yet an operation cannot restore normal anatomy or take away the memory of having been cut by those we love. I have traveled internationally as a surgeon, educator and activist in highlighting FGM and its consequences as we ally in finding ways to end this ritual. Giselle Portenier is a brilliant journalist and filmmaker who will follow the story of the courageous runaways during Northern Tanzania's upcoming cutting season, as the girls flee to the Mugumu Safe House to avoid being cut. **By helping to crowd fund this project, you help to tell this story. By telling this story, you too are helping to bring an end to FGM in our lifetimes.**

Peter Gill, Journalist, Africa Specialist, author of “Today We Drop Bombs, Tomorrow We Build Bridges”

Giselle Portenier is the most ambitious television producer and director I have worked with. Once she sets her sights on the story, nothing deflects her. She is courageous in getting to places and people and in deploying the techniques of her craft to tell the story at its strongest. Since she focused her skills on human rights stories, with the accent on women and children, she has developed a body of work of which anyone would be proud.